



## Minimum Requirements for Ordering, Handling and Storing State Supplied Vaccine

### Ordering

- ❖ Always inventory stock on-hand before placing an order.
- ❖ Order all vaccines in doses, not multi-dose vials.
- ❖ Alert office staff that a vaccine order has been placed. Orders should arrive within 10 business days.

### Receiving

- ❖ Make sure arriving vaccine shipments are never overlooked.
- ❖ Develop and post a staff protocol for accepting vaccine deliveries and ensure vaccines are appropriately stored **immediately** upon arrival.
- ❖ Open each shipment immediately, inspect the contents, and verify that the cold chain monitor displays an acceptable status.
- ❖ Note the condition of the vaccine and assure that the vaccines are cool to the touch.
- ❖ Check the order against the invoice and the actual vaccines received. Check quantity, lot number and expiration dates of the vaccines. If there are any discrepancies contact the Immunization Program immediately.
- ❖ If any vaccine seems warm or there are any questions about the condition of the vaccine at the time of delivery, mark the vaccine "Do Not Use" and place it in the appropriate storage conditions, apart from other vaccines. Call the Immunization Program for consultation.
- ❖ Depending upon the vaccine, refrigerate or freeze the vaccine immediately. Refer to the package insert for storage requirements or call the Immunization Program, if there are questions.
- ❖ Do not place unopened shipments of vaccine in the refrigerator/freezer before examining the contents.

### Handling

- ❖ Never leave vaccine out of the refrigerator or freezer when it is not in use.
- ❖ Check and log the refrigerator and freezer temperature twice a day, even if there is an alarm or monitoring system. Check temperatures, first thing in the morning and once in the evening before leaving. Call the Immunization Program immediately when refrigerator and/or freezer temperatures are outside of the recommended range.
- ❖ **Retain refrigerator and freezer logs for a minimum of 3 years.**
- ❖ If an accident or emergency situation occurs, place vaccine in a properly cooled refrigerator/freezer. Mark the vaccine "Do Not Use" and call the manufacturer immediately to verify if the vaccine is still viable.
- ❖ Do not pre-draw vaccine. Draw vaccine at the time of administration.
- ❖ Rotate vaccine each month (weekly is best) to ensure the vaccine with the shortest expiration date is being used first. Whenever possible, use the vaccine in one multi-dose vial before opening another vial.
- ❖ Use multi-dose products until the expiration date stamped on the vial, provided the product is maintained at the recommended storage temperature and properly handled. When the expiration date on the vial states only the month and year, the vial may be used through the last day of that month.
- ❖ As doses are used, mark multi-dose vials to keep an accurate inventory.

### Storage

- ❖ **Read and follow the package insert on storage of vaccines.**
- ❖ The refrigerator and freezer compartments should have their own temperature-recording device.
- ❖ Use a certified calibrated thermometer. The Department of Health may be able to provide you with a temperature-recording device. Please call the Immunization Program for additional information.
- ❖ The Immunization Program strongly suggests installing a plug guard or a safety lock plug to safeguard the refrigerator.
- ❖ Post a "Do Not Disconnect" sign on the refrigerator/freezer outlet as well as on the circuit breaker.
- ❖ Store refrigerator-stable vaccines in the refrigerator at **36° to 46°F (2° to 8°C)** with an **optimum temperature of 40° F (5° C).**
- ❖ Store refrigerated vaccines on the middle shelf with the thermometer. Never store vaccine in the door or on the bottom of the refrigerator. The top shelf of the refrigerator should be used only if necessary due to varying temperature from the freezer vent. If vaccine must be stored in a spot other than the

middle shelf, ensure a thermometer is placed in that location and the temperature is checked there as well.

- ❖ Keep empty space in the refrigerator filled with jugs of water to help regulate temperatures as well as maintain refrigerator temperatures in the event of a power outage or mechanical failure.
- ❖ Do not pack the refrigerator with vaccine; ensure that cold air can circulate within the entire refrigerator compartment, maintaining stable temperatures throughout.
- ❖ Line the bottom and sides of the freezer with ice packs to help maintain freezer temperatures in the event of a power outage or mechanical failure.
- ❖ Develop and post a *Vaccine Disaster Recovery Plan* and ensure all staff read it. Update and review the *Vaccine Disaster Recovery Plan* as staff changes occur.
- ❖ Do not store vaccine in the same refrigerator or freezer as food or biological specimens.

### Returning Vaccine

- ❖ **Never send viable vaccine back to the distributor; always call the Immunization Program first.**
- ❖ Return all open vials, unopened vials and manufacturer's pre-filled syringes of spoiled or expired vaccine to the distributor when requested
- ❖ **Do not return drawn but not administered vaccine.** If this situation occurs, please dispose of the vaccine at your facility.
- ❖ Call the Immunization Program at least **120-days** before the expiration date if there is vaccine that will not be used before it expires for possible redistribution.

### Transporting Vaccine

- ❖ Use coolers, ice packs, thermometers and polyfoam to ensure the cold chain is not broken when transporting vaccine.
- ❖ Refrigerated vaccines must not directly touch the ice packs.
- ❖ **Call the Immunization Program for details on how to properly transport vaccines.**

### Transferring Vaccine

If you transfer to or borrow vaccine from another provider, make sure to note the number of doses on your monthly inventory report.

**If ever in doubt about anything, call the Immunization Program. Refer to the *Storage and Handling Vaccine Guide*, available at <http://www.health.ri.gov/>, for more detailed information.**

